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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (07/31): Palestinians on growing
Fatah-Hamas rancor regarding conference delegates

Main Stories:

Al-Quds leads with news that several rightist Israeli groups entered the Al-Aqsa mosque compound on July 30 under the full protection of the Israeli police. The report notes that the Islamic Endowment (Waqf) office which oversees the compound condemned the Israeli action and called on Muslims to gather at the Al-Aqsa mosque to confront any future infringement by the groups.

Al-Quds runs front page coverage citing a July 29 New York Times report that Jewish settlers intend to continue challenging the Obama administration by constructing more outposts in the Palestinian Territories. The report highlights that 11 new outposts have been constructed over the past few days. In related news, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida runs a front page photo of Jewish settlers protesting in Jerusalem on July 30 and holding banners that read "Obama: Remove your hands from Jerusalem and the Land of Israel."

All dailies run coverage of the participation of Palestinian Authority (PA) Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, US Consul General Jacob Walles, and USAID Mission Director Howard Sumka in the inauguration of the new public library in the West Bank town of Beit Jala on July 30. The reports note that Walles reiterated that the US is committed to helping the Palestinian people implement projects that will help build an independent Palestinian state. The dailies noted that Prime Minister Fayyad and the USAID mission director also opened a USAID funded public park in Al-Khass village near the West Bank city of Bethlehem.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida and Al-Ayyam lead with news that Hamas "kidnapped" 19 Fatah members who were supposed to attend the Sixth

Fatah Party Congress in Bethlehem, scheduled to begin on August 4. Fatah security officials stated that if Hamas continues with these measures, Fatah will arrest Hamas members in the West Bank. Al-Ayyam reports that a number of countries are urging Hamas to let the Fatah members attend the conference. Al-Quds runs front page news that Turkey has refused to mediate between Fatah and Hamas on this issue.

Al-Ayyam front pages news citing Wafa News Agency that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will continue the policy of the previous Israeli government concerning the Gaza closure. Netanyahu is quoted in Israeli daily Maariv saying that he will not open the borders of Gaza until kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit is released. The report also notes that Netanyahu shared this position with US National Security Advisor James Jones during their recent meeting.

Al-Ayyam reports on Israeli sources noting that Israeli officials will visit Washington next month to pursue talks with the US regarding the peace process and the Iranian nuclear program.-----

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Samih Shbeib opines in Al-Ayyam independent daily under the title, "Will there be an upcoming international conference?" (07/31): "The US position has not changed at all concerning the e cessation of settlement activity and road map obligations, which indicates that the Obama administration is keen to protect its credibility and achieve a significant change in the US-Arab relationship... This determination will definitely lead to convening

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an international peace conference in the Middle East and will force Israel to engage in a comprehensive peace process."

2) Yahia Rabah opines in Al-Hayat Al-Jadida official daily under the title "The Sixth Conference" (07/31): "I still hope that Hamas will allow Fatah members to leave Gaza and attend the Fatah Party Congress in Bethlehem, which has not been held for more than 20 years...If Hamas does not allow the Fatah members to leave Gaza, what is the difference between Hamas and Israel?"

WALLES